



HARWICH

Barnstable County



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NARRATIVE

Narrative

The Town of Harwich is a resort and residential community located on the south side of the Cape peninsula, with an extensive shoreline on Nantucket Sound. It was settled around 1665, and incorporated in 1694. Its early economy included agriculture and maritime industries and its history has included boom and bust cycles from the earliest days of the community. When the whaling industry collapsed with the discovery of oil, the community's emphasis shifted to cod fishing. By 1802, 15 to 20 ships were shore fishing and another four ships were cod fishing in Newfoundland and Labrador, and by 1851, there were 48 ships employing 577 men and bringing in thousands of tons of cod and mackerel. The eventual decline of the fishing industry in Harwich by the latter part of the 19th century was caused by increases in the size of ships which eventually outstripped the shallow port's ability to house them. Residents turned to the development of cranberry bogs and resorts for summer visitors, working side-by-side with Portuguese immigrants. The first resort hotel opened in 1880 and both the cranberry and the tourist industries remain substantial parts of Harwich's economy in the present.

In 1775, when Separatists and Baptists outnumbered Orthodox Congregationalists, Harwich burghers felt independent enough to refuse to support a minister with public tax monies and they continued refusing to do so for 18 years. The town showed religious diversity from the first, including residents who are Baptists, Methodists, Reformed Methodists (anti-episcopal), Wesleyans and Catholics, among others. Commercial, motel and condominium development has been intense along the Route 28 corridor and suburban development has significantly decreased the remaining agricultural landscape, but the town retains much of its 19th century character, including period Portuguese farmhouses.

(Seal supplied by community. Narrative based on information provided by the Massachusetts Historical Commission)



GEOGRAPHY

Location

Southeastern Massachusetts, on the southeast portion of Cape Cod. Bordered by Dennis on the west, Brewster and Orleans on the north, Chatham on the east, and Nantucket Sound on the south. Harwich is about 12 miles from Hyannis, 70 miles east of Fall River, 82 miles southeast of Boston, and 260 miles from New York City.

Total Area: 33.15 sq. miles

Land Area: 21.04 sq. miles

Population: 10,275

Density: 488 per sq. mile

Climate

(National Climatic Data Center)

(Chatham WSMO Station)

Normal temperature in January.....30.4°F
Normal temperature in July.....67.3°F
Normal annual precipitation.....45.1"

U.S.G.S. Topographical Plates

Harwich, Dennis, Chatham

Regional Planning Agency

Cape Cod Commission

Metropolitan Statistical Area

(1993 Definition)

Barnstable-Yarmouth



GOVERNMENT

Municipal Offices

Main Number: (508) 430-7513

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Form of Government

Board of Selectmen

Town Administrator

Open Town Meeting

Year Incorporated

As a town: 1694

Registered Voters (Secretary of State 1994)

	Number	%
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Total Registered	7,416	
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Democrats	1,888	25.5 %	Republicans	2,053	27.7 %	Other parties	3	0.0 %	Unenrolled Voters	3,472	46.8 %
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Legislators

[Senators and Representatives by City and Town](#)



DEMOGRAPHICS

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic Area: Harwich town, Barnstable County, Massachusetts

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population.....	12,386	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population.....	12,386	100.0
Male.....	5,672	45.8	Hispanic or Latino (of any race).....	119	1.0
Female.....	6,714	54.2	Mexican.....	47	0.4
Under 5 years.....	504	4.1	Puerto Rican.....	26	0.2
5 to 9 years.....	652	5.3	Cuban.....	17	0.1
10 to 14 years.....	704	5.7	Other Hispanic or Latino.....	29	0.2
15 to 19 years.....	592	4.8	Not Hispanic or Latino.....	12,267	99.0
20 to 24 years.....	336	2.7	White alone.....	11,738	94.8
25 to 34 years.....	1,036	8.4	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years.....	1,706	13.8	Total population.....	12,386	100.0
45 to 54 years.....	1,739	14.0	In households.....	12,051	97.3
55 to 64 years.....	708	5.7	Householder.....	5,471	44.2
65 to 74 years.....	744	6.0	Spouse.....	2,919	23.6
75 to 84 years.....	1,787	14.4	Child.....	2,789	22.5
85 years and over.....	560	4.5	Own child under 18 years.....	2,086	16.8
Median age (years).....	48.8	(X)	Other relatives.....	383	3.1
18 years and over.....	10,123	81.7	Under 18 years.....	112	0.9
Male.....	4,491	36.3	Nonrelatives.....	489	3.9
Female.....	5,632	45.5	Unmarried partner.....	219	1.8
21 years and over.....	9,850	79.5	In group quarters.....	335	2.7
62 years and over.....	4,114	33.2	Institutionalized population.....	308	2.5
65 years and over.....	3,666	29.6	Noninstitutionalized population.....	27	0.2
Male.....	1,492	12.0	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Female.....	2,174	17.6	Total households.....	5,471	100.0
RACE			Family households (families).....	3,545	64.8
One race.....	12,213	98.6	With own children under 18 years.....	1,168	21.3
White.....	11,817	95.4	Married-couple family.....	2,919	53.4
Black or African American.....	88	0.7	With own children under 18 years.....	868	15.9
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	23	0.2	Female householder, no husband present.....	492	9.0
Asian.....	27	0.2	With own children under 18 years.....	242	4.4
Asian Indian.....	3	-	Nonfamily households.....	1,926	35.2
Chinese.....	11	0.1	Householder living alone.....	1,631	29.8
Filipino.....	3	-	Householder 65 years and over.....	925	16.9
Japanese.....	3	-	Households with individuals under 18 years.....	1,260	23.0
Korean.....	3	-	Households with individuals 65 years and over.....	2,363	43.2
Vietnamese.....	1	-	Average household size.....	2.20	(X)
Other Asian ¹	3	-	Average family size.....	2.72	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	6	-	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian.....	1	-	Total housing units.....	9,450	100.0
Guamanian or Chamorro.....	4	-	Occupied housing units.....	5,471	57.9
Samoa.....	-	-	Vacant housing units.....	3,979	42.1
Other Pacific Islander ²	1	-	For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.....	3,588	38.0
Some other race.....	252	2.0	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	2.2	(X)
Two or more races.....	173	1.4	Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	6.5	(X)
<i>Race alone or in combination with one or more other races:</i> ³			HOUSING TENURE		
White.....	11,949	96.5	Occupied housing units.....	5,471	100.0
Black or African American.....	150	1.2	Owner-occupied housing units.....	4,504	82.3
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	63	0.5	Renter-occupied housing units.....	967	17.7
Asian.....	44	0.4	Average household size of owner-occupied units.....	2.23	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	7	0.1	Average household size of renter-occupied units.....	2.07	(X)
Some other race.....	353	2.8			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹ Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.

² Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.

³ In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.



HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Home Sales (Banker & Tradesman) -

[Town Stats - Free market Statistics](#)

Subsidized Housing Units (DHCD 1998)

[DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory](#)

Subsidized Housing Units: The number of housing units which count toward the municipality's 10% goal for low- and moderate-income housing. It includes both subsidized affordable units and market rate units in certain eligible subsidized developments.

Public Housing Units (DHCD 1999)

Conventional State:	20
Conventional Federal:	0

Rental Assistance(DHCD 1999)

State (MRVP:	16
Federal (Section 8):	4



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

Harwich is situated on Cape Cod, a 65-mile long sandy peninsula comprising Barnstable County. The Cape has excellent highway, rail, bus and air connections to other parts of New England. Air, bus, and passenger rail service expand during the summer months to accommodate the large numbers of tourists.

Major Highways

Principal highways are U.S. Route 6, the Mid Cod Highway, and State Routes 28, 39, 124 and 137.

Rail

There is no freight rail service, but the network of intermodal facilities serving Eastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island is easily accessible.

Bus

Harwich is a member of the Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority (CCRTA), which operates a b-bus demand response service.

Other

The Chatham Municipal Airport, a General Aviation (GA) facility located in neighboring Chatham, has a 3,001' long asphalt runway. Instrument approaches available: Non-precision. Scheduled airline flights are available at the Hyannis Municipal Airport in the nearby town of Barnstable.



CULTURE AND RECREATION

LIBRARIES

[Board of Library Commissioners On-line Library Catalog](#)

(American Association of Museums)

MUSEUMS

Brooks Academy Museum

80 Parallel Street

(508) 432-8089

Brooks Free Library

Main and Banks Streets

(508) 432-1799

RECREATION

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Recreational Facilities (Recreational sites and activities)

[Department of Environmental Management Recreation Section](#)



MISCELLANEOUS

HEALTH FACILITIES

(Dept. of Public Health 1992)

Hospitals

None

Long Term Care

Cranberry Pointe @ Harwich NC

Hospices

None

Rest Homes

Rosewood Manor Rest Home

UTILITIES

[Telephone Numbers for Public Utilities](#)

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NOTE: The COMMUNITY PROFILE draws information from a diversity of sources. The main source of information is listed under each section. In some instances comments submitted by the municipality were incorporated to correct and/or enhance the information obtained from the main source. However, no changes were made to those data bases which must be consistent throughout the state. DHCD has made efforts to ensure the accuracy of all data in the COMMUNITY PROFILES, but cannot take responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of the information contained in this document.